

MUNI RATNACANDRA'S NINE JAIN QUESTIONS FOR CHRISTIANS

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This article examines a rare, and possibly unique, account of an encounter between Jain monks and British Christian Padres from an unknown denomination which took place in 1854 at an unidentified location either in Rājasthān or the Pañjāb or possibly in Āgrā. What makes this work so interesting is that whilst there has been considerable scholarship on the early stages of Buddhist-Christian and Hindu-Christian debates there has been little work on encounters between Jains and Christians. The work takes the form of nine questions which Christians should be asked and reveals unique features in how Jain tradition responded to encounters with Christians. I argue that the main arguments deployed against Christianity in the text are all adapted from earlier Jain arguments deployed against other teachings. The importance of this text then is that it allows us to have a unique insight into how Jain vernacular tradition responded to Christianity during the mid 19th century.

Part One: Introduction

1.1. The Text: The Nine Questions

This is a short work, in the form of a single copy of a handwritten manuscript, which consists of three folios containing a text of around two thousand words. The text contains a set of nine questions which were (and should be) posed to Christians during an encounter with a group of Christian Padres which took place in 1854. The dates of the encounter and the work can be inferred from a question in the text in which it says that “you say your lord died 1854 years ago”. Due to this it seems reasonable to argue that the work was composed in CE 1854. The title of the work as given at the end of the manuscript is “The nine questions of Ratanand”. (However, at the start of the manuscript it begins “the English people who are the servants of Jesus”.)

The text is one of several hundred Jain manuscripts in the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine collection in London. These manuscripts, in Hindī, Sanskrit and Prakrit, were collected in the early part of this century in India and the majority of them came originally from Rājasthān and the Pañjāb in a wide range of Indian languages including Hindī, Pañjābī, Sindhī, Persian, Sanskrit and a range of Prakrits. It is likely that this

manuscript was written in Rājasthān as it has many characteristics in common with manuscripts which were definitely written in this region (Friedlander 1996: 9-13).

1.2. The Author: Ratancand

The author of the work identifies himself in the manuscript as Ratancand (Skt. Ratnacandra) disciple of Harjīmal. Research by Peter Flügel (2007: 181f., 2011: 9) allows the identification of this author as Muni Ratnacandra (1793-1864) disciple of Muni Harajīmal (Harjīmal) (1783-1832) of the Manoharadāsa (Manohardās) lineage of the anti-iconic Sthānakavāsī tradition. Ratnacandra was a Rājput from the village of Tātījā in Śekhāvātī near Jaipur and was initiated in 1805 in Nāranaul in Hariyāṇa. The areas he was active in included Pañjāb, Hariyāṇā, Madhya Pradeś, Rājasthān and western UP. He was an influential scholar monk and wrote a variety of yet unpublished commentaries on the Āgamas and other works in Hindī. He also had a number of disciples and taught monks from other Sthānakavāsī traditions, such as Muni Ātmārām (later: Vijayānandasūri), who became well known proponents of reform and revival in the Jain tradition. A number of hard to locate biographies were written about his life and work which may shed more light on his encounters with Christians and their significance in the wider context of the intense religious rivalries in the Pañjāb in the 19th century.

1.3. The Contents

The contents of this work may be summarised as follows. A meeting took place, at an unidentified, perhaps Rājasthānī, location, perhaps an *upāśrāy*, between a group of people who were perhaps missionaries and who are described as ‘The English servants of Jesus’ or as the ‘padres’ and Ratancand and his followers. The manuscript records nine points that were raised by the Jains at the meeting and some partial replies by the Christians. Regarding the importance of these nine questions in the conclusion Ratancand stated:

“If these nine doubtful issues are resolved then everything will be known about the ‘truth’ and the ‘untruth’ (*tattvātattva*). So these nine points should be answered.”

The reason for there being nine questions posed must be related to the Jain tradition of regarding the universe as consisting of nine, or seven, ultimate “reals” or “truths” (*tattva*). According to Umāsvātī’s *Tattvārthasūtra* there are seven such *tattvas*: “sentient soul,

insentient matter, karmic influx, bondage, stopping karmic influx, wearing away of accumulated karma, and liberation.” However, in the earlier *Uttarādhyayanasūtra* categories of *pāpa* and *puṇya* were included bringing the total number of “reals” to nine (Cort 2001: 192). From a comparison of the nine *tattvas* and the nine questions it may be concluded that Ratnacandra’s reference to the nine questions covering all that may be known relates to this categorization of what is real (*tattva*) and what is unreal (*a-tattva*). A comparison of the contents shows that the similarities between the two series of “nine points”, if intended at all, are purely formal.

Table 1: The *navatattva* (Nine “reals”) and the nine questions

	<i>Tattva</i>	Question
1	Jīva (sentient souls)	What calendar was used before the birth of Jesus?
2	Ajīva (insentient matter)	How were people liberated before Jesus?
3	Āsrava (karmic influx)	The ten commandments all concern karma, what are the fruits of karma?
4	Bandha (bondage)	If Jesus is merciful to all then why do English people eat meat?
5	Pāpa (demerit)	In what manner does Jesus grant liberation?
6	Puṇya (merit)	What is virtue and sin?
7	Samvara(stopping karmic influx)	Why can’t we see Mount Meru? Is the earth bigger than the sun?
8	Nirjarā (wearing away of accumulated karma)	If someone does something while unaware what is the fault in this?
9	Mokṣa (liberation)	What is liberation?

One additional proviso which should be mentioned is that there are actually ten points, not nine as the title suggests. The explanation for this is that there are two parts of question seven. The reason for this is unclear, but as the conclusion clearly speaks of nine questions the way that question seven has two parts suggests that the repetition of the heading ‘seven’ was a scribal error.¹

¹ It is likely that this work was dictated to or recorded by a scribe, perhaps a monk or a lay person, and in this process confusion may have arisen over what constituted the seventh point.

1.4. Text and Translation

The text is composed mostly in a form of pre-modern Hindī which shows features of modernisation due to contact with early modern standard Hindī. It also includes some Rājasthānī grammatical features and draws on a diverse vocabulary from Prakrit, Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic sources. There are also a number of quotes in, very corrupt, Sanskrit.

A complication in understanding the text is that the orthography does not follow any later standard conventions. For instance the equivalent term to the modern Hindī *is liye*, ‘because of this/therefore’, is represented as *sa līya*. This poses considerable problems in interpreting the Hindī in the text, and makes the translation of the Sanskrit quotes extremely difficult.

One explanation for what may be, in parts, simply spelling errors in the text is that the scribe might have been a novice or particularly hurried. A further possible explanation, suggested by Veena Chopra, an expert on Rājasthānī dialects (Personal Communication, 14 July 2013), could be that the scribe might have been unfamiliar with the language of this text. Yet another possibility is that the document was recopied from a document which was itself illegible. This is suggested by the eminent Sanskrit scholar J. C. Wright who proposed in relation to one of the Sanskrit verses that in its third *pada* “perhaps the copyist's source was illegible between *mātrvat* and *paṇḍitaḥ* and he filled the line with nonsense” (Personal communication, 13 July 2013)

Furthermore, there is no separation between words, which whilst normal in pre-modern Hindī manuscripts makes understanding what constitutes words in a prose text like this hard to settle. In addition there is almost no punctuation and at times this makes it hard to work out how to divide the text into meaningful sentences.

Due to these factors I have not found it possible to make what could be called a precise translation, I have rather tried in some places to make a readable translation of what appears to me to be being said in the text.

However, despite these difficulties it is a rare, possibly unique record of a pre-print culture Jain response to Christian missionary contact and so worthy of further study and discussion of its contents.

Part Two: Translation

अथ अंगरेज लोगो के इसा मुसे के सेवणहारे ॥

पादरी लोगों कों इतनी बात पुछी बास्ते ईसा मसी के वाकव होवन के वासते १

अंगरेज लोको जैनी लोगोंने नौ बात पुछी एक का जबाब देना चाहिये

Now, the English people who are the servants of Jesus.

These points were asked of the padres concerning Jesus and what he taught. The Jain people asked of the English people these nine points, each of which needed an answer.

प्रथम बात कुं तुम्हारे प्रभु ईसा मसि ने ते उतार लिया कुं जितने सन हुय उसे पहला किस के सन गिनने थे या ईस मसी नें उतार लिया पाव धए था सन इ सबि केतेर वरस चलेगा आगे किस का सन बरतेगा ऐसा अतीत अनागत यातो भूत भविष्यत अतीत काल का निरनां करा चाहिये १

First point

What era were years counted by before the incarnation of your Lord (*prabhu*) Jesus? How many years will there be in the Christian era, and what will be the next era counted in the future? You must tell us about the past eras and the future eras.

दूजी बात ईसा मसिह नें औतार लियां सन १८५४ हुइ इस से पहली मनष का: या जगत में जनके पाप मोचन कौन करता या अथवा मनुष हु तें थे व या नहि इस उतारने सें पहला ब्रहमांड में औतार होता था की मानथि आतमा के पाप प्रयाश्चित² आत्मा कीस्तन्न सें होते थे या ईसा मसी की सुदरि दृष्टि सें होते थे इतनि बात का भेद हम कुं बतावणं चाहिये २

Second point

If Jesus was born 1854 years ago then before that how were people liberated from sin, or are you saying there were no people before that? Or are you saying he was incarnated before that in the universe. By what method³ were souls/selves (*ātmā*) atoned of sins? Were the souls/selves liberated by being 'Christian'⁴ or by Jesus gazing on them from afar? You must tell us how to explain the distinction of this question.

² Read *prāyaścīt*.

³ I understand Hindī *māna* here in the sense of 'standard, code or belief' or 'method'.

⁴ Ratanand uses the English word *kīstanna* here, as is used in Gujarātī and Marāṭhī, rather than *īśāī*, the contemporary Hindī word for Christian.

तीजी बात अंगरेज लोगो के पादरी (च?ठ?)पे की पोथी देते है सो हम देख्यते है जिस मे ईसा मसे नें दस अग्या फुरमाई ते १० ए० १० अग्या माहि हमारे प्रभु जिनंद्रदेव नेमि फुरमाया है ते बुरा पर स्त्री गमन १ प्रधन हरण २ चोरी ३ भगवान की सोगंद षाणि ४ किसी का बुरा चित्तवनां ५ बदीसुदी आवे चौदस कों गृहको कांम न करनां प्रमेश्वर का ध्यान पूजा कर्णा इत्यादिक फुरमाई है परंतु हमारे प्रभु नें सुकरम सु मुक्ति होती बताई है तुम सु कर्म से मुक्ति नहीं मानते हो १० अग्या कर्म है इण कुं सम्याके सत रांजां सु कर्म का और कुं कर्म का फल क्या होता है इस का जबाव चाहीये ३

Third point

The English padres have given us printed books and we have looked at them. In them Jesus has ordained Ten Commandments (*āgyā*). Ten of these ten commandments have also been said by our Jinendradev Nemi to be wrong: first, to go with the wife of another; second, to kill; third, to steal; fourth, to swear using the Lord's name; fifth, to think ill of anyone; on the fourteenth of the dark and bright halves of the month not to abstain from work in the home.⁵ In addition to contemplate the Lord and perform devotions etc. have been ordained. But, our Lord has ordained that liberation is found through good actions (*su-karma*). You do not believe in liberation through good *karma*. The Ten Commandments are all concerned with *karma*, Tell us what the fruits of good and bad *karma* are. We need the answer for this.

चौथी बात तुम्हारे प्रभु ने ईसा मसीहने सर्व जगत जीव उपर स्मभाव नरष्या किस तरां न राष्या सो हम नें ऐसा जान क लिष्या⁶ है अंगरेज लोक मांस भषण करते सो ईसा प्रभु की आग्या सै करते होंगे ईसा ने फुरमाया होंगा स्त्री ना २ अजा भषण करते सो तुम्हारे लिष्या से मालूम होगा परंत ईसा संदेह हम कों होता है जो ईसा ने मांस भषण फुरमाया होगा तो सर्व जीवा उपर समन रहया मनुष्या सामर्थ है

Fourth Point

Your Lord, Jesus Christ looks with equal grace on all living beings of the world. In what manner does he do this? We have seen this written. English people eat meat. Will they do this at Jesus's command? If you say that it is at his commandment that you eat goat meat then we doubt it from what you write. But if Jesus ordered that you eat meat then how does he look equally on all creatures?

⁵ This is probably a reference to the observance of *pākṣika-āvaśyaka* rites etc.

⁶ For *liṣyā* read *likhyā*.

तिस के वास्ते अनाथ जीव के षाने की अग्या दर्ई है ऐसा अन्याई पगंवर होयकर किस तरां फुरमाया होयगा तथा बिना आग्या भषण करते होंगे अंगरेज लोग का न्यां कुछ ब्रीक भी (१-आ) नही दिष पडती है

How can a prophet ordain such an injustice⁷ that helpless creatures should be eaten? But, if he has not done so then why do English people eat meat without his commandment to do so. The justice of the English seems strange.

जबरदस्त षांना सामरथ वानं होइ कर निरवल अनाथ कों भषण कौन सा न्या है तथा अंगरेज लोकों के कनून में और नीत में जवर और नीबल कों एक सरीषा जान कर न्याय करनां लिष्या है तो ईहां न्याय ऐसा क्यूं न रष्या जो समर्थवान होय कर असमार्थ अनाथ जीव कुं मरेंगा जिस कुं सजा क्यूं न लिषी तुम्ह कहिते हौ मनुषां का प्रधानपण है सेष जंतू का प्रधानपण नहीं है ए बातण ठीक दीषती है यु नही दीसती है

What justice is there in the powerful⁸ forcibly eating the meat of the helpless and orphaned? In both English people's law and policy animals and the weak are treated alike. So why is it not written in the laws that someone of power who kills someone weak should be punished? You say that humans are supreme and other animals are not supreme. Does this point look right or not?

कोई मनुष्य किसी की इस्त्री से जबरदस्ती गमन करे उस को सजा होती है उस परसत्री के गमण का कुकर्म ठहराया है जो ये न्याय ठहराया तो परजीव के पसू नीर्बल के जबरदस्त उसके प्राण षोसें उसकुं सजा क्यूं नहीं और कोम अन्याय नहीं होगा तथा किसी मनुष का वस्त्र गया गहिना गया नगदी किसी जबरदस्त ने षोस लेई उसकुं सजा देनी कनून में लिखी है और गरीव पसू अनाथ जीव कुं जबरदस्ती प्राण लुटते है प्रात उसके प्राणलूटे है यानें उसकी जिंदगी लुटते हैं कुछ सजा नही लिषी क्युं

If some man were to go force somebody's wife to go with him then he would be punished. This going with a woman other than your own is said to be a wrong action in law. So if he forcibly takes the life of an innocent animal, why is he not punished for this, is it not an injustice? And if a man forcibly steals someone's cloth, jewellery or cash, then it is written in the law that he must be punished. And if he forcibly takes the life of some poor animal, or kills an animal, or takes its life, then it is not written in the law that he should be punished, why? And if he forcibly takes the life of a poor animal or an orphan animal and takes its life, that is to say kills it, then why is there no punishment for this written?

तथा तुम कहोंगे मनुष का जनम प्रधान है पसू जीव कवी प्रधान है नही

And you say that the life of a man is supreme and that the lives of animals are not important.

⁷ For *anyāi* read *anyāya*.

⁸ For *sāmarth vāṃn* read *samarthvāṃ*, 'powerful, capable'.

ऐसे कहोगे तो उसका जुबाब यही है किसी का पुत्र पुत्री तथा सती वगैरें चुराया होय तो सजा देती चाहीये और किसी का बालद चुराया होय तो सजा है और प्राण षोसन की क्या सजा नही है ऐसा न्याय किस तरां मांन्या है सो हम को बडा अर्चज है

If you say this then our answer is, if someone's son, daughter, wife etc. were kidnapped, then someone should be punished, and if anyone's ox is stolen then there should be a punishment, then why should there be no punishment for taking life? What sort of justice is this? It is very astonishing for us.

इस का जुबाब सूषम विचार करके देना चाहीये

The response to it should be given having thought about the subtle nature of the issue.

तथा आतमा कहोगे थावर जीव बनसपती अन्न प्रमुष का अहार करते हौए हवी जीव है या नही इस का जुबाब देना चाहिये

Also you should tell us about the *ātma*, whether it is better to eat immobile living beings, plants, grains or not. You should answer this.

हमारे प्रभु जिनंद्रदेव बीतराग देव दोषरहित अे अग्या १ नद २ निद्र ३ प्रमाद ४ इंद्रिविसय ५ मोह ६ क्रोध ७ मांन ८ माया ९ लोभ १० राग ११ दवेष १२ हास १३ बिषवाद १४ मद्धर कहीये ईरषा १५ कांम कहीये इद्धा १६ परद्रोह १७ अलीक कहीये झूठ १८ ए १८ दोष रहित श्री जिनंद्रदेव हमारे परमेश्वर ने यह फुरमाया है

Our Lord Jinendra is beyond passion and is free from these faults:⁹

1. ignorance (<i>ajñā</i>), ¹⁰	10. greed (<i>lobha</i>);
2. pleasure (<i>ānanda</i>), ¹¹	11. desire/attachment (<i>rāga</i>);
3. sloth (<i>nidra</i>);	12. aversion (<i>dveṣa</i>);
4. carelessness (<i>pramāda</i>),	13. destruction (<i>hrās</i>);
5. sensual experience (<i>indri-viṣaya</i>);	14. poisonous speech (<i>biṣvād</i>);
6. delusion (<i>moha</i>);	15. jealousy, i.e., envy (<i>matsya kahiye irṣya</i>);
7. anger (<i>krodha</i>);	16. lust, i.e., desire (<i>kāmā kahiye icchā</i>);
8. pride (<i>māna</i>);	17. emnity for others (<i>pardroha</i>);
9. deception (<i>māyā</i>);	18. falsehood or lying (<i>alīka kahiye jhūṭha</i>).

⁹ Compare this list with the canonised '18 causes of sin' in the Śvetāmbara-Āgamas.

¹⁰ Or perhaps 'agnosticism' cf. Jaini 1990: 53.

¹¹ For *na[n]da* read *ānanda*, this is one of a number of possible amendments to the readings of the texts which have been made on the basis of advice given by two Jain nuns, Samaṇī Pratibhaprajñā & Samaṇī Prasannaprajñā, who read through the text during a visit they made to London in 2012.

This is what has been ordered (*farmāyā*) by our Lord Jinendra who is free from these 18 faults.

स्लोक १ आत्मवत सर्व भूतानी परद्रवाणी लोष्टवत परस्त्री मातृ वतेग्ये यं जो जानाति पंडितः

इस का अरथ एही है जंगम थावर जीव का उत्पत्त कारन दोइ एक तो आच्छी १ पिसाच्छी २ आच्छ सै उत्पन्न होय अन्न प्रमुष तिसका आहार करणे सें बुद्धी बिगडती नही मलीन वी मलीन बुध होती है और बिगडती है जैसे पाणी के पीये सें नही नसा होता है मदपान सें नसा घुमता है बुद्धी बिगडती है निज पर की बुद्धि नही रहती है धर्म कर्म की बुद्धीप नष्ट होती है इस न्याय सें आबी घाने सें बुद्धी नही बिगडती है निज पर की बुद्धी नही रहित है

śloka:

(1) *ātmavata-sarvabhūtānī / paradrabāṇī loṣṭavat*
parastrī-mātr-vategye / yaṃ jo jānāti paṇḍitaḥ

He is a Paṇḍit who regards [*jānāti*] all beings as himself, the possessions [*dravya?*] of others as a piece of earth, who looks on other's wives as his mother.¹²

The meaning of this is that mobile and immobile beings arise due to two causes, noble, and demonic.¹³ The noble arise due to being mostly feeding on grain due to which their minds are not befuddled. Dirt makes consciousness dirty and befuddles it. Just as from drinking water

¹² The precise meaning of this verse is not clear as the Sanskrit is extremely corrupt. For the readings of the unclear characters and translation of this Sanskrit *śloka*, and the two following *ślokas*, I am indebted to Royce Wiles (Personal Communication, 8 July 2013). Further examination of this verse by J. C. Wright (Personal Communication, 13 July 2013) indicates that it is a version of a traditional saying found in a wide range of sources:

“It is another version of one of Boehtlingk's Indische Sprüche, 1st ed., 1863, no. 2173, 2nd ed. 1870-72, no. 4805: from Pancat, Hitop., Canakya, Subhashitarnava, etc. (Sternbach, AKM, 1965, lists other sources, including a Pali Dhammaniti in J. Gray, Ancient proverbs ... the Nīti literature of Burma, 1886): *mātrvat paradārāṃś ca paradravyāṇi loṣṭhavat, ātmavat sarvabhūtānī yaḥ paśyati sa paśyati*. 2nd ed., 1870-73, no. 905, from Subhashitarnava. Sternbach says ‘Cf. PdP Srshtikh. 19.359’. *Ātmavat sarvabhūtānī / paradravyāṇi loṣṭhavatmātrvat paradārāṇi / yaḥ paśyati sa paśyati*. Wer alle Geschöpfe wie auf sich selbst, auf fremdes Gut wie auf einen Erdkloss, und auf eines Andern Weib wie auf seine Mutter schaut, der schaut richtig. The 3rd *pada* [...] is obviously impossible: perhaps the copyist's source was illegible between *mātrvat* and *paṇḍitaḥ* and he filled the line with nonsense. On the 'facilior' principle, *paṇḍitaḥ* (and another vulgate reading *vīkṣante dharmabuddhayaḥ*) would be a substitute for *paśyati*. The vulgate *paradārāṃś ca* is surely wrong, but would account for the inversion in your version and no. 905 (initial *ātma sarva* produces anticlimax).”

¹³ *pisācī* from Skt. *piśaca*, demon.

there is no intoxication, but from drinking alcohol the mind reels and is befuddled. So the defiled cannot control their consciousness and their consciousness of *dharmā* and *karmā* is destroyed. This is the argument that eating base¹⁴ foods which degrade intelligence makes one lose control of the self.

पीसाछी के षाने सें बुद्धी नही रहती है कुबुद्ध उतपन होती है जिस कारन हमारे प्रमेश्वर श्री जिन्नेद्रदेव ने पिसावी षाने नहीं बताये हैं नही फुरमाये हैं आछीमें विसू का अगन प्रजलत होई सो देह धारणनि मत फुरमाया है अहार करणा और सामरथ होइ तो आवीवी न करें

By eating demonic foods reason is lost, and bad knowledge created, due to which our Lord Śrī Jinendradev has said not to eat demonic foods. He has said that eating base foods inflames the fires of sensuality which support the body. He has ordained the view that for food and supremacy one should not act foolishly.¹⁵

परंत पिसाछी षाने का क्या फल है बहु दुषदाई है आछी षाने का कीचित है जैसे मनुष किसी का हीरा जवाहर नगदी लूटे उस कों सजा बहुत होती है पसू बलद घोडा लूटे तौ उसको सजा बहुती है किसी के पास कानुन षाषो सलीया तो उसकों सजा किचित है

But, what is the fruit of eating demonic foods, it causes great suffering. Crow's¹⁶ consciousness arises from eating base food. Just as a man gets a great punishment if he steals diamonds, jewels, or cash. Just so if one steals cattle, oxen or horses, then in law there is great punishment. That is why everybody has laws and due to them there is a punishment for crime.

तथा तुम कहोगे पीसाछी नही षावो तो दुद्ध दही घृत क्युं षावो सलीया तो उसको सजा कीचित है तथा दुध दही घृत क्युं षावो हो एह दुध दही घृत पीसाछी नही हे एह वा अवीकी उत्पती है

So you may say 'we don't eat demonic food' but then why don't you eat milk, yoghurt and ghee? From this there will be consciousness of punishment. Then if you say 'why eat milk, yoghurt and ghee?' we say 'this milk, yoghurt and ghee are not demonic and they do not give rise to lack of discernment.'

¹⁴ For *ābī* read *ochī* from *ochā* adj. base, mean, low.

¹⁵ For *āvīvī* read *avivekī* 'without *vivek*' that is, without discernment.

¹⁶ *kākī* a female crow.

एह सूषम चारि देष्यां सें मालूम पडती है और पिसाछी सें मदोन मत होता है

From seeing this, subtle ideas are known, but from demonic food intoxication and madness arises.¹⁷

जिसे प्रभु की आग्या अराधन नही होती नही है सो एह मास भाषण कीस तस्यो अंगीकार कस्यो पसू जीव न की दया क्युं नही बतावते ऐसैं हम कुं बडा अंदेसा हे ४

Due to this there is no observance of the Lord's orders.¹⁸ So this eating of meat, in what way¹⁹ is to be accepted. Why do you not teach compassion for living beings and animals? We are much in doubt about this.

पांचमी वात ईसा मसी तुम्हारे प्रभु लोगो के साहिबें पगंबर तारकि की मुक्ति किस तरां सों कहीता हैनि केवल ईसामसीह की सामरथ ताहै ऐसैं है

Fifth Point

Jesus Christ, your Lord, master of people, your people's lord prophet²⁰, in what way does he grant liberation (*mukti*)? Is it thus that it is only through Jesus Christ's power?

या और लोगो को उपदेस कर भली बुध पडयायकर मुक्ति पद देता है या ईसा के नाम पर भरोसा रषें हैं उसको मुक्ति पद देता है या सर्व जीउं की दया सें मुक्ति देता है या ईसा के नाम रथता है ऐसा है या और तुमारे लोगो की कहित हे

Or through other people's teachings increasing awareness and granting liberation? Or through belief (*bharosā*) in his name that he gives liberation? Or through compassion on all living beings that he gives liberation? Or through the repetition²¹ of Jesus's name? Is it like this or something else, how is it that your people explain it?

हमारे श्री प्रभु जिनेंद्रदेव पाश्र्वनाथ वगैरें घणो अवतार हूण सो अप दर्शन ज्ञान चा (२-आ) रित्र ए तीन २ तपस्या करे आत्मा निरमल ग्यान से आत्मा का अनात्मा का भेद रूप जानी दर्शन सें आपणा निज पदारथ उवोडा इसी भांत आत्मा निरमल हुइ जदे जगत वासी जीवा कुं उपदेस कर भली बुध पढाई

¹⁷ For *madanmatta* read *madamatta* adj. intoxication and madness.

¹⁸ I take the phrase *prabhu kī ājñā ārādhana* in the sense of praising/observing the Lord's commandments.

¹⁹ For *kīsatasyo* read *kis tarah se*, 'in what manner.'

²⁰ For *pagambar* read *paigambar*, nm. 'prophet' (Persian).

²¹ For *rathā* read *raṭṭā*, 'repetition', = *rahtā*?

तुम्हारे प्रभु ईसा मसी हे मुक्ति बताई तुम्हारे प्रभु ईसा मसी हैं मुक्ति सामथपण से करते है तोउ नार लेणि से क्या प्रजोजन था स्वरजोग लोग से समरथ पण सु क्यो नही करे उपदेस देकर तो कुण कारण सुं मुक्ति होती बणाई है एसका जुवाब देना चाहीये ५

Your Lord Jesus Christ has told of liberation.²⁶ If your Lord Jesus Christ liberates through his power, then what was the point in his taking human form? Why did he not liberate people from heaven? Why did he give teachings on how liberation is obtained? This point should be answered.

छछी वात धर्म की बात कौणसी और पाप की बात कोणसी हमारे श्री जिनेंद्रदेवजी ने फुरमाया जीव र(क्ष) ते दया ते धर्म और जीव हिंस्यां याने षांणांत²⁷ सोही पाप प्राणघात मेडव प्रध ग्रहण इत्यादिक प्राण तस्या तमेही ए २ बुरीया इत्यादिक प्राण तस्यामेंही ए फुरमाया अने हींस्याना फल नरक दया ना फल स्वर्ग

Sixth point

What is the nature of *dharma* and what is the nature of sin (*pāp*)? Our Jinendra has taught that through the protection of life and compassion for living beings there is *dharma* and through violence towards living beings there is sin. [...] [Untranslated text]²⁸ He ordained that the fruit of violence is hell and the fruit of compassion is heaven.

श्लोक प्राण रषणंतुलंधर्म पापश्चप्राणघातकइ क्षमातुलंतपस्यै नभूतोभविष्यती १ इस का अरथ एही है प्राण रष्या बरोबर धर्मन ही प्राण घात बरोबर पापन ही षिमां बरोबर तपन ही आगे हूवा नही अव हौसी नही हमारे प्रभु ने धर्म फुरमाया है और प्रभु ने नरक गमण जोग फल सुरंग गमण जोग कर्म कौण है एस का सुषहम विचार करके उतर देना चाहीये ६

śloka:

*prāṇaraṣaṇ atulaṃ dharma / papas ca prāṇa-ghātaḥ
kṣamātulaṃ tapasyai / na bhūto bhaviṣyātī*

No dharma is higher than protecting life, no sin greater than killing,
no penance is greater than patience/forgiveness, not ever in the past or future.

The meaning of this is that there is no *dharma* that is the equal of protecting life, no sin is the equal of taking life, and no austerity (*tapan*) is the equal of forgiveness. This will never not be and has never not been. This is the *dharma* ordained by our Lord (*prabhu*). Tell us what

²⁶ The phrase *mukti batāi*, 'told of liberation', is used in both Jain and Christian contexts here.

²⁷ For *ṣaṃṇānt* read *prāṇānt*.

²⁸ The meaning of this sentence, which relates to issues to do with killing, is unclear.

your lord (*prabhu*) has said which is the *karma* that leads to heaven and to hell. After thinking, tell us the subtle truth concerning this.

सातमी बात पृथ्वी गोलाकार है १२ हजार च्यार सय ३४ स कोस की पृथ्वी घेर प्रमाण अरहट की न्याई सदा घुमती रहती है श्री प्रमेश्वर की समरथाई सें अकास के बीच लटकती है निराधार है इत्यादिक बात पृथ्वी की विद्य से सिद्ध करी ऐसी पृथ्वी की बात पुषताई ठैहरती नही ऐसी बा (३-अ) त बिद्या बिना सिद्ध नही होती है ऐसा हमकों भरम है जिस का संदेह इस सवतहु हें जिहां लगे तुम्हारी बिद्या का बल पहुचा तिहां गलत

Seventh Point (part one)

‘The world is round and its circumference is 1234 *kośās* and like an *arahaṭa*²⁹ it constantly revolves due to the sovereignty of the Lord, it hangs without support in space, etc.’ You say this on the basis of earth science.³⁰ But, such a thing cannot be proved without firm foundations. We do not believe it and doubt your science, for the power of your science only goes so far, and you are mistaken.

तुम्हने जाना कि पृथ्वी इतनी है साख्रौ सर्वत महां जनपुरिस्या नें ग्यान प्रगट हुवा है तिस ग्यान में हस्तकमल की जूं सर्व बात उनके ग्यान में प्रकास प्रगट है

You have learned that the earth is of so many thousands of *kośās* altogether, and this knowledge (*jñāna*) has been brought to light in the *Hastāmalaka*.³¹

यथा दरपण निर्मल होइ तिसमें दूरकी बस्तू का प्रतिबिंब पडै है इण न्याय हौ ग्यान रूप दर्पण निर्मल प्रगट हुवा जिस तें लोकालोक सरूप दाषलक करता है विद्य सें नहीं झलकता है

Just as reflections of distant objects appear near in a perfect mirror, so the forms of this world and non-worlds are visible in the mirror of knowledge (*jñāna*), not through science (*vidyā*).

जथा किसी मनुष्या के पासे दूरबीण या जलबीन तिस में दूर की वस्तु देषण की युगल कहें दूर बस्तु निजीक दिष पडती है ते आष सें नही दिषदी है अऊसे न्याय से जो जो वस्तु ग्यान सें मालूम पडती है सौ वीद्य से मालूम नही पडती है

²⁹ An *arahaṭa* or *rahaṭa* (Skt. *araghaṭṭa*) is a water lifting device, sometimes called a Persian wheel, which constantly revolves and raises water.

³⁰ *pr̥thvī kī vidyā*. For *vidyā* as ‘science’ see the discussion of the translation.

³¹ The *Bhūgol Hastāmalaka*, “The Earth as [a Drop of] Clear Water in Hand” was a pioneering Hindī text on cosmology and geography based on western science written by Rājā Śivaprasād Siṃha (1823-1895) who was himself a Jain and published from the 1850s onwards (Lal 1992: 4025).

Just as if someone has a telescope or a ‘water-scope’³² through which they can see distant objects as if they were nearby with his own eyes. In the same way objects (*vastu*) which are knowable through (soul) knowledge (*jñāna*) are not knowable through science (*vidyā*).

सास्त्र ग्यानी दे ग्यानवान सें प्रकास करया है ए दूरबीण वत विद्य आषनी दृष्टवत आषनी दृष्ट में जेती बिषण उतनी ही दिष्ट पडती है सो विद्या का बल जाहां लगं पहुच्ये तिहां लग मालूम पडगा जादा नहीं ग्यान सें बहुत मालूम पडती है विद्या तो एक इलिम है

Those who are endowed with the knowledge /knowers of the wisdom of the written texts (*śāstra*) have made clear, the science of the telescope allows the eyes to see according to the visual sense of the eyes.³³ So the power of science can only reach so far and no more, more can be known by (intuitive knowledge?) wisdom (*jñāna*) than science (*vidyā*) which is only a [form of limited/ empirical] knowledge (*ilm*).

जैसैं किसी नें एक फारसी नें एक फारसी का क्या जाणे और सरब होई तो सरबग जाणे इलम सीष्या तें अंगरेजी कों क्या जानें इण सों सास्त्र बिद्या बाला फारसी अंगरेजी कों क्या जाणें और सरब होई तो सरबग जाणें इण बीचार न्याय सें सास्त्र सें बिद्या नहीं मिलती है विद्या सें सर्व बातन ही पाई जाती है सो उतम

It is like somebody may know a Persian but not know Persian, the English have learned science (*ilm*) but they do not know everything (*sarbaga=sarvajñāna*). By learning the strengths of the sciences what do the Persians and English know? Only by learning everything can one become omniscient. From this logic, wisdom (*nyāya*)³⁴ is not the same as the written text (*śāstra*) of science (*vidyā*), all things may be known from it, so it is the foremost.

१२ हजार ३४ कोस की धरती सही करी इस सें ओपरंत का क्या बास्ता है तथा अकास पताल में क्या क्या कही क्या बस्तू है सो न जाणें तुम कहोगे पंच नहीं तो पवन क कितना घेर है उर पवन सें परली तरफ क्या बस्तू है सो तुम नहीं बताया तो इस वास्ते बिद्या कुछ प्रमाण नहीं ठहरती ग्यान मे अनंतेभाग ठहरती नहीं है धरती कमलाकार चक्राकर है जिस मध्ये १ पर्वत है ऐसा कथन सूक्ष्म बिचार बहुधा प्रकार सों हे थोडे कागद मे लिष्या नहीं

If the earth is 1234 *kośās* [in diameter] then what is beyond it? What things are in the heavens and in the hells? You do not know. You say there are not five [elements]. How wide is the

³² For telescope Ratanand uses modern Hindī *dūrbīn*. A ‘water-scope’ (*jala-bīn*) is clearly a similar kind of device, but this word is not attested from later sources. It is also possible that the text should read जलबिंब which could be interpreted as meaning something like ‘reflections in water’.

³³ *biṣaṇ* for *viṣaya*, Skt. nm. adj. knowledge of a sensual object.

³⁴ By context in this instance *nyāya* should be read as a spelling mistake for *jñāna*.

circumference of the atmosphere? What is the substance beyond the atmosphere? You have not said, and due to this science cannot be established. Is it not established³⁵ through wisdom (*jñāna*) that the earth is in the form of a round lotus with a single mountain at its centre? This proposition is a subtle idea, not something which can simply be written on a piece of paper.

एह तुम्ह कहोगे जो तुम्ह कहोगे मेरु (३-आ) परबत लाष जोजन क ऊचा है तो हम को क्यों नही दीषती है यैसा नेत्र का आइना नहीं हे ग्यान मे दीष्टा है आंष दूरबीन के न्याय से समझ लेना ईहा के प्रकास आसा नही है ग्यान मैं दी कोई परबत १० कोस का उचा कोई पांच कोस के उचो नही दीषते मेरु परबत ईहा सें ४५ जोजन है सो किस तरां दीषे इसी बात हमारे जिनेद्रदेव नें देव के सासत्र से कोई दोष निकालोते तो हमको सरब प्रकार कर दीष जावो तो जानीयें

You ask us 'if Mount Meru is 100,000 *kośās* high why can we not see it?' It is not seen in the mirror of the eye, it is seen through wisdom. The eyes can only see like telescopes can see. It's (i.e. Mount Meru's) light is not cast here, but in wisdom. From here you cannot see a mountain of five or ten *kośās* in height, and as Mount Meru is 45 *yojanas* from here, so how could it be seen? Our Jinendra has said this in the *śāstras* which are free from all faults, likewise if a man were free from all faults then he could see it.

सातमी बात पृथवी सें सूरज वडा है ४ कोड कोरं दूर है पृथवी से चंद्रम १ लाष २० हजार कोस जु मनीया से छाप्पा है सो ए बात सासतर बिना प्याल बिद्या से चंद्रमा २० लाष २० हजार ग्यानी पुरसां ने लषी है असमान पर जमीन पर कोई गया है या नही इस का जबाब देना चाहीये ७

Seventh point [part two]

The beliefs which are printed [in the book:]³⁶ that the sun is bigger than the earth and it is 40,000,000 *kośās* distant and the distance from the earth to the moon is 120,000 *kośās*. These matters have been seen without [knowledge of] the *śāstras* through the science of imagination (*khyāl vidyā*): that the moon is 2020 [*kośās* in diameter]. Have they been seen by any wise man? Has anyone on earth been to the sky or not? You should give us an answer to this.

आठमी बात किसी अबोध कुं गृथल को भ्रम से भ्रमा एकर सुक्रत में नष्ट करनां कुकर्म परव में थापनां किसका दोस है जैसे कोई पराया अंस रगेए करावे तीय तिना दोस है तिस का जुवाब ८

Eighth Point [meaning unclear]³⁷

³⁵ *ṭhaharati* from *ṭhaharnā*, vt. to stay, abide, to be established.

³⁶ This refers back to what is printed in the *Bhūgol Hastāmalaka*.

³⁷ The meaning of this short passage is unclear. This translation is based on the following interpretations, for *grthala* read *grdhar* 'greed', for *sukrata*, read *sukṛita*, virtuous action, for *aṃsa* read as *aṃśa* portion. The sense

If a fool (*abodh*) deluded by greed were misled and destroyed what had been collected by virtue, then in establishing that wrong-*karma*, who is at fault? Likewise if somebody were to take somebody else's portion and do [...] what would be the fault in that? What is the answer?

नौमी बात

तुमने छापे छापीअ कर्म सों मुक्ति नही होती है तो इस का जुवाव एह है कर्म से नर्क भी नहीं होती होगी सुकर्म का फल होवेगा तो कुकरम का फल होवेगा नही होइ तो कुकर्म करी क्यु डरना है

Ninth Point

You have printed in a book 'liberation (*mukti*) is not the result of *karma*,' so the response to this is 'then bad actions (*karma*) will not lead one to hell', for if good *karma* has a result, then bad *karma* *must* have a result. Otherwise why should one fear having done a bad action?

ब्रह्मा बिसन महेस का मरम बतानां चाहीये कुकरम करतां कों सजा देनी चाहिये नही देनी तो इस का जुवाव देना चाहीये और मुक्ति किस तरां होती है मुक्त होनें सें क्या प्राप्त होता है मुक्त हुवा पाछे औतार होता के नही इस का जुवाव देना चाहीये हमारे प्रभु श्रीश्वभटारका जुवाव देना चाहीये

You should consider the examples of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheś.³⁸ If one does bad actions (*karma*) one should be punished, and if one is not punished tell us why? And what is the nature of liberation (*mukti*)? What is attained through being liberated (*mukta*)? After liberation, is one reborn or not? You should tell us the answer to this. You should tell our venerable teacher (*bhaṭṭāraka*).³⁹

और जिनेंद्रदेव ने राग दोष मोह भ्रम ममत्व वैदक ए कांम मिथ्यात्व कहीये परमात्मा परमेश्वर सें उपरांत और देव को सरधहणां राषणी याने भरोसा रषानां ते मिथयात्व इत्यादिक कांम सें अलगा होता है जद मुक्त प्राप्त होता है मुक्त मे जनम मरण वृधापण काया कर्म इसत्री पूरुष नपुंसक ए नही होता है औतार नही होता है मुक्त में जनम मुक्त नां भेद किण तरां से कह्या सो हम को समझणे की इच्छा है सो जुवाव देना चाहीये ९

And Jinendradeva has said that the passions (*kāṃma*) of desire (*rāga*), aversion (*doṣa*), delusion (*moha*), deception (*bhrama*), envy (*mamatva*), and emnity (*baidaka* = Skt. *vairya*)

seems to be: if somebody harms something unknowingly or unwittingly harms something of somebody else's then what is the fault (*dosa=doṣa*) in that?

³⁸ That is, the Hindu trinity of Brahmā the creator, Viṣṇu the preserver, and Śiva (the 'great god') the destroyer. I would infer that this would be reference to how even great beings like these three gods are all known to have suffered dreadful consequences due to wrong actions by them leading to them experiencing the fruits of their *karma*.

³⁹ This was perhaps a reference to Ratanand if the text was being written down by one of his disciples.

are errors. Beyond the error of [the passions] there is the honouring of the supreme self (*paramātmā*), supreme god (*parameśvar*) and other gods, that is to say there is belief (*bharosā*). When one is separated from passion, liberation (*mukti*) is obtained. One is liberated from birth, death, old age, the body, *karma*, male, female and neuter gender. There is no incarnation. Tell us what you know of the characteristics of birth as well as the liberated in life⁴⁰, we have the desire to understand about that, so tell us.

ए ९ वात का संदेह मेटया सों तत्वातत्व का सरब मालूम होवे है सो एही नव वात का जुबाब देना चाहीये ९ प्रसन स्वामी रतनचंदजी हरजीमलजी का चेला ने बनाए समाप्तम

[Conclusion]

If these nine doubtful issues are resolved then everything will be known about the ‘truth/real’ and the ‘non-truth/real’ (*tattvātattva*). So these nine points should be answered.

The end of the nine questions composed by Svāmī Ratancandjī, disciple of Harjīmaljī.

⁴⁰ For *janam mukta* read *jīvan mukta*, ‘liberated in life’.

Part 3: Discussion

I would like to now point out what could be seen as the logic behind the questions posed. I suggest that each question Ratanand raises is one he implies can be used to test, and to disprove, the validity of Christian teachings, and at the same time to re-emphasise the validity of the Jain principles.

First question: What era was before the Christian era?

The first question that Ratanand poses to the Christians is whether there were eras before Christianity and whether there will be eras after Christianity. Why this was seen as a point to question Christians over needs consideration. I would suggest three possible reasons, one springing from Jainism itself, one from Jain debates with Hindus, and one general point.

Jain tradition is well known for its interest in the nature of time and the pattern of cyclic creation and destruction in which different Jain Tīrthaṅkaras are periodically incarnated (Jaini 1990: 30-33). From this viewpoint it appears to be quite reasonable for Ratanand to begin with a discussion of whether Christianity has also a theory to explain what eras proceeded, and will follow it, which would distinguish Jainism as an eternal teaching from Christianity which would only be a temporary truth.

Jain tradition may also have had developed an argument on these lines in relation to debates with Hindus. Young (1981: 23, 138) noted a number of instances of Hindus arguing for the superiority of their teaching due to it being 'as old as the world itself'. He also suggests that this was a consistent tactic in Hindu apologetics against both Christianity and Jainism to try and show that the other tradition was 'an upstart'. The argument that Young sees as implicit in this is that if a religion is older, it is superior. In this case then Ratanand's argument may also reflect arguments in Hindu-Jain debates being now applied to Jain-Christian debates.

However, what strikes me about the logic in asking this question is that if Ratanand could get his opponents to admit that their view was only true at a particular time, during the Christian era in this case, one can argue it is not ultimately valid, as it is only valid under limited circumstances. So this was the first test for Christianity, had it always existed? If not, then Jainism was superior as in each era of the universe Jain teachings periodically appear.

Second question: How were people liberated before Christ?

This point follows on from the first and it shows that the Christians had admitted that Christianity began at a certain time in the past, and this had revealed a weakness in it. Ratancand then argued that the Christians need to explain how beings were liberated before Christ.

One Jain perspective on this question which might cast light on its importance is that Jains were known for criticising belief in a Creator God, and salvation through grace (Jaini 1990: 89). In this context it then makes sense for Ratancand to be questioning Christian's belief in God and the role that Christ plays in granting salvation to beings.

The second aspect of the question appears to also relate to the first two of the *tattvas*, the nature of the *jīva* and *ajīva*. However, the focus is on the issue of whether liberation comes about due to beings 'being Christ' or due to 'Christ's distant gaze'. This is I think a question about whether Christians are a variety of monist *advaita* followers, believing in the identity of beings and the supreme being, or some sort of a dualist *dvaita* teaching with a separation between beings and supreme being. Such an argument about the identity of the spirit and God may reflect Jain debates with Hindus over this point being applied by Ratancand to debates with Christians.

Third question: The commandments

Here Ratancand raises the point that the Christian ten commandments and Jain codes of conduct, or vows (*vrata*), have great similarities, but Christianity reveals a clear difference: it does not accept the functioning of *karma* (Skt. *karman*).

Here Ratancand's question clearly lines up with the third of the *navatattvas* as it is about how *āsrava*, karmic influx, functions. One of the distinguishing characteristics of South Asian religious traditions is the belief that *karma* is inherent in the structure of the universe. Apart from the ancient materialist Lokāyata tradition the belief in *karma* is common to all ancient South Asian traditions.⁴¹ It must therefore have seemed an obvious weakness in Christian teachings that they do not assert that liberation is attained through the purification and final dissociation of all *karma*. Theories of how the gradual shedding of *karma* lead to successive stages of purification of the spirit are integral to Jain tradition. So for the Christians to not assert the central role of *karma* must have been seen as a very weak point in their teachings, and equally a very strong point in favour of Jain tradition.

⁴¹ See Basham (1951) on the Ājīvikas for a discussion of this point.

Young (1981: 139) argued that a distinctive feature of Hindu anti-Christian arguments was “karman and rebirth are logically more satisfying explanations of suffering than the Christian notion of probation or sanctification”. It appears certain that in a Jain context, or in a Buddhist context, the *karma* argument might have been seen slightly differently than by Hindus. For Hindus salvation is possible by divine grace, for those who followed devotional (*bhakti*) traditions, and by the performance of rituals for those who followed the Brahminical Vedic path. However, for Jains those paths to liberation were not open and so the emphasis put on personal effort was much greater.

Fourth question: Why do you eat meat?

This point is very long, which indicates I think that it was a critical issue in Ratancand’s view. I will therefore discuss it in several sections. Ratancand starts by pointing out that it is inconsistent to say that Christ regards all of creation alike, yet allows one type of being to eat another.

Looking for inconsistencies was also one of the tactics employed by Christian missionaries in their attacks on other traditions. The same tactic was also used by Hindus and Buddhists to attack Christianity, and here Ratancand does the same. Young (1981: 120) examined how Hindus attacked Christians for mistreating animals, in particular cows and oxen. Young also argued that Hindus felt the eating of beef signalled the chaos of *kali yuga* and that Christian lack of compassion for animals showed the unsoundness of their teachings.

Ratancand’s next argument confronts British law and Christian teachings in that he questions why if the law prohibits murder and rape, it does not also prohibit the murder of animals. In the modern era when church and state are argued to be separate the relationship between Christianity and Western justice may not seem apparent to many people, but to Ratancand the injustice in the difference between the treatment of animals and people was an argument against Christianity.

There is no direct counterpoint to this issue that I can find in any Hindu or Buddhist attacks on Christianity. In view of the importance placed on the ethics of *ahimsā* in Jainism this seems a very distinctively Jain way of attacking Christianity.

Ratancand then introduces a list of the faults which the Jain *tīrthaṅkaras* did not have, which both establishes their credentials as teachers and leads into the next point Ratancand wants to make, which is that the consciousness of those who eat meat is inherently clouded and so Christian teachers are inferior to Jain teachers.

This is an argument which I cannot find mentioned as a Hindu or Buddhist polemic against Christians, and which is clearly related to the importance of vegetarianism. In the

present day even some Christians have similar worries and there have been arguments made that Christ was himself a vegetarian (Regenstein 1991: 180-2). However, Western and Buddhist arguments are based largely on the notion that killing animals is cruel. Ratancand's argument is that eating meat pollutes consciousness.

Another aspect of this debate may also reflect internal Jain relations between the Śvetāmbara and Digambara Jain traditions. Dundas (1985: 181) has pointed out that Jain descriptions of the characteristics of a *tīrthāṅkara* stress not only their pure knowledge but also a debate between Śvetāmbara and Digambara Jains which lasted for centuries about whether a *tīrthāṅkara* was beyond hunger and whether hunger would cause inferior consciousness (*mati-jñāna*) to arise in them.

However, a second aspect of this argument is perhaps more a distinctively Jain response to Jain-Hindu debates. Jaini (1990: 183) points out that a long standing bone of contention between Jain and Mīmāṃsaka, Hindu traditions, had been over whether it was the Hindu Vedas or human Jain teachers who were infallible. Whilst Ratancand, notably does not apparently consider attacking the Christians on their equivalent to the Veda, Christian scripture, he clearly identifies that Christian teachers' claims to true knowledge are false as their consciousness is clouded due to their dietary habits.

Ratancand then changes tack and argues, apparently, that not only do Christians eat 'demonic' foods (*pisācī*) but also that Christians neglect to eat milk, curds and ghee (*sattvik* foods), and this is a fault in them.

There is a strong sense in the text here that what was written down was an actual report of a discussion which took place between Ratancand and the visiting Jesuits or missionaries.

Fifth question: How does Jesus grant liberation?

Ratancand's fifth point concerns the ways in which liberation is to be attained. It is notable as well that each of the ways he speaks of is related to another religious tradition. The notion of a prophet is a non-South Asian concept and appropriately he questions whether Jesus is a *paigambar*, an Islamic word for a prophet. It is also striking that he speaks of belief in the name of god as something separate from repetition of his name. I think the former is a reference to Islamic and devotional Hindu belief in the name of God, and the latter to repetition of the name, as in Sufi *zikr* or as in the practice of *jāp* in Hindu *bhakti* devotional cults.

Ratancand does not seem to have shown an interest in whatever the Christians then said in response to these questions. This is probably due to the *praśnottara* genre of texts,

where the answers are to be supplied by the opponents. This points to an important aspect of this text: it does not really tell us what Christian's would have replied to the questions, apart from when it forms part of a subsequent argument.

Ratancand then leads off into a description of the Jain path to liberation as revealed by Pārśvanāth based on the purification of the *ātma* and understanding the difference between spirit and nonspirit (*ātma* and *anātma*). After stating the Jain position Ratancand questions the Christians over their position, and employs the strategy of pointing to the inconsistency that if Jesus was all powerful why did he need to take incarnation as Christ?

Young (1981: 28) points to similar issues being raised in the 1830s in Bombay in debates between Christian evangelists and Hindu *paṇḍits* and the same question being raised of why if he was all powerful did he need to incarnate himself.

Sixth question: What is virtue and sin?

Ratancand's next point focuses on the difference between *dharma*, virtue, and sin, *pāp*. Ratancand points out that it is *karma* that determines whether somebody goes to heaven or hell, and that a vital factor in this is practicing non-violence. The Jain stress on *ahiṃsā* is clearly the major influence on this question.⁴² It is also notable that this question on the nature of *dharma* and *pāp* fits neatly into sequence as a discussion of the nature of *pāp* and *puṇya* in the nine "reals" (*nava-tattva*).

Seventh question: The world

There are strong indications in this section that Ratancand is reporting directly what the padres were saying to him. It addresses some of the central questions about geography and cosmology that formed part of the debate between Christian missionaries and Hindus and Buddhists and, it seems, Jains. A considerable number of the points here are also clearly related to the text called *Bhūgol Hastamālaka* which was an early and influential Hindī printed text on the new Western understandings of cosmology and geography being introduced into India at this time.

(1) Ratancand starts his question by restating what he understands from what the Christians have said, regarding factual data about the size of the world and such matters, but

⁴² However, in that the question is posed against the issue of who goes to heaven and hell it also possibly relates to a number of Hindu arguments against Christianity. The focus of these arguments revolved around the issue of how *karma* was a better explanation of why one went to hell or heaven, than Christian belief in liberation through grace (Young 1981: 139).

questions on what basis they can say this. He then rejects the validity of the means by which secular knowledge has been gained and distinguishes between *jñāna*, real knowledge gained from the *śāstras*, and secular knowledge which he variously terms *vidyā* and *ilm*. The term *vidyā* has a long history of usage in South Asia and is often used alongside *jñāna*, as a term signifying wisdom or knowledge and magic. However, unlike *jñāna* it is also used to describe arts, in the sense of skills, and it is not hard to see how it could also be translated as ‘science’ in the old sense of a science being an applied art. Indeed, this seems to be the way that Ratancand is using it in this text. Alongside this he also uses the Perso-Arabic term *ilm* to refer to secular knowledge of a limited nature. His essential point is that both *vidyā* and *ilm* are forms of knowledge, but do not constitute proof. The only legitimate basis for proof (*pramāṇa*) in regard to any point are either the sacred texts (*śāstra*) or direct perception (*pratyakṣa*).⁴³ Thus the Christian attempts to argue that Jainism is false due its cosmology being false are groundless as they are not supported by the *śāstras* or by direct perception.

Young noted a similar distinction being drawn in Hindu writings from the 1830s, between *jñāna*, as religious knowledge, and *vijñāna* as scientific knowledge. It is this pair of terms has become the normal way of distinguishing these ideas in many modern Indian languages, including Hindī, rather than Ratancand’s usage of *jñāna* as opposed to *vidyā*. However, the use of *vidyā* to mean ‘science’ has an interesting parallel as Taylor (1893: 7) rendered it in just this way in his translation of the *Prabodhachandroya* which suggests that the notion of *vidyā* as ‘science’ has a long history of usage in South Asia.

Ratancand then turns to another way to undermine Christian ideas, a criticism that Christian’s knowledge is only partial, and therefore unsatisfactory. Whilst Jain knowledge is based on subtle understanding (*sūkṣam vicāra*) the Christian’s knowledge is simply something written on paper (*kāgada me liṣyā*).

One of the issues is whether Mount Meru is visible. We can infer that the Christians pointed out it was not visible, and that this showed it did not exist. The logic of Ratancand’s attack on this point seems to hedge its bets somewhat, on the one hand he states that you can’t see, with the physical eye, Mount Meru as it’s only visible through wisdom (*jñāna*) not through the ‘mirror of the eye’, but on the other hand it also can not be seen simply because it is too far away.

(2) Ratancand then starts another seventh point apparently opposing the arguments in the *Bhūgol Hastamālaka*. He argues that western cosmology is based on the science of imagination (*khyāl vidyā*), while Jain knowledge is based on either the *śāstras* or direct perception, and they are the only valid grounds for knowledge.

⁴³ For Jain interpretations of *pratyakṣa*, *parokṣa* and *pramāṇa* see Umāsvāti’s *Tattvārthasūtra*.

In terms of the *navatattva* it might have been expected that this question would relate to the concept of *saṃvara* (stopping karmic influx), and yet it appears to have only a very tangential relationship to this issue. However, it could be suggested that Ratancand's focus on the distinction between *vidyā* and *jñāna* could be seen as relating to a distinction between negative and positive influences on the individual.

Eeighth question: Awareness and *karma*?

This is a short point and there are a number of problematic issues with its text; which mean, I cannot make a proper translation of it. In so far as I understand it, the gist of it is a consideration of whether actions done without awareness result in the accumulation of *karma*. The appropriate topic drawn from the *navatattva* sequence to introduce at this point would have been one on *nirjarā* (wearing away of accumulated *karma*) but as the meaning of the text is unclear I cannot comment further on this point.

The Ninth Point: What is liberation (*mukti*)?

The issue of *karma* then takes centre stage in the first part of the last question when finally Ratancand turns to a central issue in the debate between Christians and Buddhists and Jains, what is the nature of liberation (*mukti*) itself? This is also the ninth *tattva* in the *navatattva* sequence and so further evidence that Ratancand's questions are based on this set of issues as their primary agenda.

The distinction between rebirth in a heaven and liberation (*mukti*) was a central issue in Christian relations with Hindus, Buddhists and Jains. On the one hand Christians attacked their opponents arguing that *mukti* was nihilistic, on the other hand Hindus and Jains argued that Christianity offered only rebirth in heaven, a lesser goal than liberation itself. Ratancand's question therefore cuts to the heart of the different world views of the Jains and the Christians. Essentially his argument is that the Christians cannot explain the nature of liberation, and so their teaching is defective as it does not touch on this point from the *navatattva* which must be explained by a *dharma* for it to be complete. Hence his conclusion is that as Christianity does not address the nine key points he has raised, it cannot be a complete teaching.

Conclusion

Ratanand's 'Nine Questions' is an interesting text for three reasons. First, in itself it poses issues about the relationship between Christianity and Jainism which are still as valid today as when they were written. It is therefore interesting in itself. Second, it is an example of a text representing a pre-twentieth century response to the colonial Christian intrusion into South Asia and this makes it unusual and interesting. Third it shows how the basis for Jain criticism of Christianity could be based on the classical Jain theory of the nine reals, the *navatattva*.

I would also suggest that we can see some continuity between Ratanand's arguments and those put forward by the Jain protagonist in the 11th century Hindu allegorical drama the *Prabodhacandrodaya*. A careful reading of the *Prabodhacandrodaya* is needed, as it is an allegorical play intended to show the falsity of non Brahminical teachings, such as those of the Jains, but still in the process shows some aspects of how Jains were seen as arguing. The Digambara ascetic in it states his basic position as being that the soul is inherently pure and separate from the body which is constantly polluted by the senses (Taylor 1893: 33). Then in the play he is depicted as arguing with a Buddhist monk by questioning how his rites were established and the authority of Buddhist scriptures over the issue of the Buddha's omniscience (ib., pp. 36f.). This is interesting as it is one of the focal topics in the Christian encounters with Hindus and Buddhists and in Ratanand's text. The Digambara Jain ascetic then goes on to ask a Kapālika Śaivite ascetic about the nature of his rites and the nature of liberation as found through his practices (ib., p. 39). It is apparent as well that Ratanand asks the padres these same questions, the nature of their customs, and the form of liberation that following their tradition grants.

There is a similarity then between the underlying assumptions made by the Jain ascetic in the *Prabodhacandrodaya* and Ratanand. This suggests that Ratanand may be the heir to a very long tradition of Jain rhetoric in regard to how to argue with followers of other traditions and it is this tradition which shaped the initial contact between Jain ascetics and Christianity, and modernity, in Rājasthān and Northern India.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Harris (2004) and Young (1996, 2003) are amongst authors who have argued in relation to Buddhism in Sri Lanka that the view that the Buddhist revival was a simple response to Western Christian activity is an oversimplification and we need to consider the ways in which tradition and modernity developed in a broader sense to appreciate what occurred during the colonial era. In a similar way Oddie (2006) has argued that Western constructions of Hinduism developed in response to traditional Brahminic understandings of religion, rather than being purely imposed Western categories.

Moreover, unlike early Sri Lankan Buddhist anti-Christian rhetoric, it shows no sign of considering the two religions as opposites. Instead I suggest that Ratancand represents Christianity as an incomplete teaching which testifies to the validity of Jainism. Moreover, in comparison to Hindu responses to Christianity and their emphasis on the infallibility of the Vedas, it is apparent that it is the authority of teachings, the nature of *dharma* and the nature of *mukti* which takes centre stage in Ratancand's response as articulated through the doctrine of the nine reals (*navatattva*).

In conclusion, this suggests more research needs to be done on the interaction of Jain traditions and Christianity to determine the extent to which the interaction was shaped as much by traditional arguments as by responses to new ideas introduced by colonialism. However, until more works such as that by Ratancand are identified, this area will remain to some extent unexplored.⁴⁵

What therefore makes Ratancand's 'Nine Questions' a text which deserves some attention is that it does show a range of traditional Jain strategies for dealing with other religious traditions, here deployed against Christianity.⁴⁶ Moreover, a number of the issues addressed also appear to be ones with reasonable and universal appeal which are likely to be of interest to people from many different religious, and secular, backgrounds.

⁴⁵ See Flügel (1999) for an account of some aspects of early encounters between Western scholars and Jainism.

⁴⁶ See Granoff (1994) and Dundas (1999).

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